



Transportation Fact Sheet

Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Program

Access to and within the National Park System has been a defining experience for generations of visitors.

The National Park Service (NPS) coordinates the planning and implementation of transportation systems that improve the visitor experience and care for national parks by:

- Preserving natural and cultural resources.
- Enhancing visitor safety and security.
- Protecting plant and animal species.
- Reducing congestion.
- Decreasing pollution.

NPS is committed to being a leader in pursuing strategies that can help make park units more enjoyable, cleaner, quieter, and more sustainable for present and future generations.

For more information, visit
nps.gov/transportation

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Program funds transportation options to protect resources and improve the visitor experience for national park visitors.



The Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands (ATPPL) Program, established in 2005, funds capital and planning expenses for alternative transportation systems in national parks and other public lands, in order to address problems such as traffic congestion and limited parking in environmentally sensitive areas. By providing alternative transportation options—including shuttle buses, traveler information systems, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities—visitors to national parks can focus on enjoying the park experience, not worrying about traffic jams or insufficient parking.

A grant program jointly administered by the Department of the Interior and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), ATPPL is highly competitive. In fiscal year 2006, the first year of the program, a total of 78 project proposals, representing \$40.5 million in planning and capital funding requests, were submitted for consideration, in competition for approximately \$19.6 in available funding that year. A total of 42 projects were selected, including 31 NPS projects. In FY 2007, a total of 80 project proposals, totaling \$55 million, competed for \$20 million in funding; 46 projects were selected, including 37 NPS projects.

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ATPPL's impact in the parks

The types of projects funded over the last two fiscal years include bus and tram replacement, shuttle bus transfer area rebuilding, ferry dock rehabilitation, and planning and feasibility studies. Examples include providing funds to lease shuttle bus service to Fort Clatsop at the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. NPS intends to continue to seek ATPPL funds to provide alternative transportation options that reduce congestion and pollution, and increase visitor enjoyment.

ATPPL has also provided technical-assistance and research funding at the program level. Transportation Assistance Groups (TAGs), for example, bring technical expertise directly to national parks and other public lands: conducting a site visit, evaluating field conditions, scoping project ideas, discussing potential stakeholder partnerships, and providing preliminary recommendations to land managers on whether, and how, to move forward with an ATPPL project. Additional ATPPL research and program-level activities—such as outreach and training on the ATPPL program to potential applicants, a transit vehicle procurement guide, and lessons learned from earlier ATPPL projects—are being discussed and prioritized.

At the project level, ATPPL provides grant funding on a year-to-year basis and does not support program development and administration, system level planning, unforeseeable cost changes, emergencies, or strategic initiatives. Furthermore, ATPPL may only fund one phase of a project; funding at an initial stage does not guarantee that other phases of the same project will be awarded future funding. Because many NPS transportation projects are large and complicated, these issues are of concern. Also, ATPPL does not cover ongoing transit system operations (other than vehicle leasing) and maintenance. Operations and maintenance, however, account for most alternative transportation system costs; how to cover these



ATPPL funding allowed San Juan National Historical Site in Puerto Rico to purchase two small trams, operated by the municipality of San Juan, to provide transportation between the two forts.



Fort Clatsop shuttle bus, funded in part by ATPPL funds.

expenses, on a park-by-park basis, is an ongoing challenge, since passenger revenues alone—as is the case for transit systems in general—are not sufficient. How, or whether, ATPPL could be used to fund operations and maintenance is a topic of ongoing discussion with NPS and its partners. The current multi-year surface transportation law is set to expire at the end of fiscal year 2009, and successor legislation could result in changes. At the invitation of FTA and the Federal Highway Administration,

NPS has outlined a legislative proposal that would enable ATPPL to address these issues.

